WILLIAM FARQUHAR'S DRAWINGS OF MALACCA PLANTS

By I. H. BURKILL.

The Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland possesses a volume of paintings of plants, 55 in all, which was given to it in 1827 by Lieut.-Col. William Farquhar of the Engineers, the first Resident and Commandant of Singapore. In Farquhar's handwriting on the fly-leaf is written "Medicinal plants, etc., of Malacca" and his name. It is obvious that the paintings are part of the "very large collection of drawings and subjects of Natural History" which Jack said Farquhar had made in Malacca (see Jack's letters to Wallich (Jour. Straits Branch Roy. As. Soc. 73, p. 151; 1916)).

In 1818 Raffles was instructed by the Marquess of Hastings to seek a settlement to the eastward of Malacca, and, sailing from Calcutta in December with William Jack as his personal physician, reached Penang on the 31st; Farquhar who had been in Malacca since 1803, had been put under Raffles' orders and had arrived in Penang on the 30th bringing all or part of that collection with him. Jack in the letter cited wrote "I have just had an opportunity of examining his (Farquhar's) drawings of Malacca plants. Most unfortunately from want of scientific acquaintance with the subject they are deficient in many essential points of dissection; but they will be extremely useful as a guide by taking the native names .... and making inquiries." Wallich says that Farquhar employed a Chinese artist. The pictures would be his work; and there is no reason to think that they are not all by one hand. Some of this artist's brush-work is very beautiful; some of his drawing is conventional and unreal; half of the pictures represent no more than the vegetative parts. Of course, Jack, now for the first time in Malaya, would feel it hopeless to put botanical names without flowers; and his criticism was just.

Under each picture (with seven exceptions) the Malay name is written in Arabic characters; one hand wrote the names under the first 25 pictures and numbered them; another wrote the names under the rest, but did not number them. Doubtless Farquhar used Malays on his staff for this; and there is none of his own handwriting anywhere; but it is clear that from somewhere there was a direction in the choice of subjects, because in the time of the first clerk Zingiberids were favoured: in the time of the second, esculent roots had some favour. Pencilled numbers are present also, and this numbering shows that two paintings that were numbered 9 and 47 were removed before the rest were bound. The volume was bound by a book-binder in Paternoster Row, London; and a numbering in ink at the tops of the pages appears to have been done at the time of binding: this numbering takes no notice of the missing two. After the binding had been done, someone transcribed the Malay names into English characters, first in pencil and then inked them; and the same hand added a few notes, the longest of which is on the use of Croton seeds among the Tamils. This hand sometimes introduced mistakes—for instance, wrote *rambaga* (for *rĕmbega*) on the illustration of *Abutilon indicum* to which it does not belong, and, faced by a picture of the race of *Zingiber officinale* known as *halia padi*, though properly so named in Malay, wrote *aliea bara* which belongs to a different race.

Scattered on the pages are various attempted determinations, sometimes wild, in other hands, all assuredly written after the volume left Farquhar's possession. Disregarding them, I have made the following inventory by the numbers in ink:—

1. sĕrunai laut—*Wedelia biflora* DC.
2. kĕtuwir—*Derris trifoliata* Lour. (D. uliginosa Benth.).
3. balek angin—*Mallotus paniculatus* Muell.–Arg.
4. balek adap—*Mussaenda,* probably *mutabilis* Hook. f.
5. lĕnggundi—*Vitex trifolia* Linn., an unusual form with simple leaves.
6. hujan panas—*Phyllanthus pulcher* Wall.
7. tulang-tulang—probably one of the Rubiaceae.
8. gĕndarusa—*Gendarussa vulgaris* Nees.
9. (without a name)—*Abutilon indicum* Don.
10. jĕringau—*Acorus calamus* Linn.
11. tutup bumi—*Elephantopus scaber* Linn.
12. kĕnchur—*Kæmpferia rotunda* Linn.
13. lĕmpoyang wangi—*Zingiber aromaticum* Valeton.
14. lĕnjuang—*Cordyline fruticosa* Gœppert.
15. bongĕlai—*Zingiber cassumunar* Roxb.
16. aliya bara—*Zingiber officinale* Linn., a pungent race of ginger.
17. tĕmu kunchi—*Gastrochilus panduratum* Ridl.
18. lĕngkuas—*Languas galanga* Stuntz.
19. lĕnguas ranting—*Languas melanococca* Burkill.
20. tĕmu pauh—*Curcuma mangga* Valeton & van Zyp.
21. tĕmu gajah—*Curcuma* probably *xanthorrhiza* Roxb.

22. haliya padi—*Zingiber officinale* Linn., a somewhat acrid race.
23. nara pusi—*Voandzeia subterranea* Thouars.
24. rumput kěměnyan—*Salomonia* sp., agreeing with no known species.
25. ati-ati—*Coleus atropurpureus* Benth.
26. pokok jarak—*Ricinus communis* Linn., the Castor oil plant.
27. (without a name)—*Hibiscus sabdariffa* Linn., the Rozelle.
28. pokok sireh—*Piper betle* Linn., the Betel pepper plant.
29. tuba darat—*Derris trifoliata* Lour. as regards the fruit; but *D. heptaphylla* Merr. as regards the flowers.
30. rěmbega—*Calotropis gigantea* R. Br.
31. don tumboh duan—*Bryophyllum pinnatum* Kurz.
32. ubi těropong—*Dioscorea esculenta* Burkill, the Lesser Yam.
33. kěledek puteh—*Ipomoea batatas* Lam., a rather curious race.
34. ubi Jawa—*Dioscorea alata* Linn., probably Roxburgh's *D. atropurpurea.*
35. (without a name)—an epiphytic orchid.
36. (without a name)—another epiphytic orchid.
37. ubi Běnggala—*Manihot utilissima* Pohl, the Tapioca plant.
38. pěnggaga—*Hydrocotyle asiatica* Linn.
39. kěladi puar—*Typhonium trilobatum* Schott.
40. chěměkian—*Croton tiglium* Linn., the Croton oil plant.
41. kunyit—*Curcuma domestica* Valeton, the Turmeric plant.
42. kěladi sěminyak—*Colocasia esculentum* Schott, a pink skinned race.
43. kěladi bělanda—the same, a pale brown skinned race.
44. kěladi Jawa—the same, a deep violet skinned race.
45. kěladi sěrakeh běnuwa—the same, with very numerous daughter tubers (probably the same race now known as kěladi rakit).
46. nasi-nasi—*Psychotria* sp.
47. balam—*Madhuca malaccensis* H. J. Lam.
48. sunti—*Adinandra,* probably *A. acuminata* Korth.
49. pinang utan—*Pinanga* sp.
50. chengkoh—*Mesua ferrea* Linn.
51. bidara pahit—*Eurycoma longifolia* Jack.
52. (without a name)—*Hibiscus abelmoschus* Linn.

53. (without a name)—*Clerodendron paniculatum* Linn.
54. kĕchubong puteh—*Datura metel* Linn.
55. (without a name)—*Connarus ferrugineus* Jack.

It is obvious that most of the plants came from gardens in Malacca; others would be found in the untidy ground which surrounded the port and was kept partly cleared that unwelcome visitors might not approach unseen. Only four are actually trees. It is interesting to read a note which calls the Tapioca the best tuber available in Malacca. Of the four races of kĕladi (nos. 42–45) local tradition, as incorporated in the names, attributed one to Java and a second to importation by the Dutch. The Greater Yam seems to have attracted less interest; and the Lesser Yam (no. 32) seemed to the writer of the notes to need this comment—"a most excellent vegetable partaking of the yam and sweet potato"—as if it were unfamiliar. Only one race of the Sweet potato is figured and that a curious one. Of 'greens', pĕnggaga alone obtained a picture. The pictures of the Zingiberids are praiseworthy representations of flowerless, and, in general, not fully grown plants; and Jack would be helpless in face of them. The plants of magic in medicine,—gĕndarusa (no. 8), tutup bumi (no. 11), lĕnjuang (no. 14) and *Clerodendron paniculatum* (no. 53)—are pictured, the first in its dark form, because the dark is reputed to be the more powerful; so too lĕnjuang is figured in its deep claret form. It is interesting to observe tutup bumi drawn as if from garden soil, whereas tutup bumi in order to possess the pentacle of Solomon's seal should be grown on sun-dried hard soil. Of medicines that every Malay uses without any harm to himself, sĕrunai laut (no. 1), lĕnggundi (no. 5), ati-ati (no. 25), hujan panas (no. 6) and balek angin (no. 3) are figured; and so are potent drugs as Croton and Datura. Farquhar's title 'Medicinal plants etc.' is justified.

The use of sunti for Adinandra is unexpected. The name nara pusi appears in R. J. Wilkinson's Malay-English Dictionary (1932, pp. 165 and 292) as of an unidentified plant. It is now possible with reasonable certainty to equate it with *Voandzeia subterranea*, the Bambara Groundnut, though the Chinese artist did not draw the secondary venation in the leaves correctly, made the runners unduly thick and had neither flowers nor the characteristic pods which the plant buries in the soil. Arab traders probably brought the seeds to Malacca, and Zanzibar was a likely source.